

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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THE BASE PROBLEM - the Church acts in reconciliation

The recent frenzied opposition of the Sunakawa populace to the extension of the Tachikawa Air Base has brought public attention to focus on the growing friction between U.S. Military bases and the local populace in many areas. However, at the same time that the demonstrations in Sunakawa were underway, there was a meeting of the National Christian Council Military Base Problem Committee (see JCAN #64, 7/1/55 p3-4) in Tokyo. At this meeting representatives from five Christian centers for servicemen met with the Committee.

It became evident here that the Church is not merely standing by but is taking an increasingly active role in bringing understanding between servicemen and local residents. According to the reports given at this meeting the local churches are often taking the leadership to bring understanding between the two groups. Rev. C. Eguchi, minister of the Kyodan church in Tachikawa (near Tachikawa Air Base) said, "Even though the young people of our church definitely oppose the extension of the Air Base (the particular issue in question during the current struggle), we the members of the Tachikawa church are doing our best to maintain goodwill and treat individual soldiers with kindness. Wherever possible, we seek to build up mutual understanding through sharing our respective viewpoints with each other."

Pastor Tetsuo Osaka of Musashi Toyooka Church near Johnson Airfield said that the Toyooka Church was founded sixty seven years ago and thus has a very influential position in the town. The mayor of Sayama city (which also borders the Airfield) is an elder in the church and also most of the leaders of the Japanese employees in the Airfield are Christians. Every month there is a conference between

the representatives of the local residents and the Airfield. Thus there has grown up a spirit of understanding and cooperation between the local residents and the American service personnel in the Base.

It was decided at the meeting that in addition to the Christian centers for servicemen at Fuchū, Toyooka, Kure, and Tachikawa, centers should be started at Sendai, Tokyo, Fuji (somewhere near Mt. Fuji) and Fukuoka. It was also decided to request five missionaries to work in these centers. It has been found that directors who come from the home land of the servicemen are necessary for the best operation of the centers.

DALAI LAMA TO USA - a service project of C.W.S.

The older brother of the present Dalai Lama of Tibet has escaped to the USA through the help of the Japan Church World Service Office. Mr. M. Denpa Rabache Tagster, the former Dalai Lama who gave up his throne to escape Communism, has been in Japan until last week. He gained entrance to the USA under the 1953 Refugee Relief Act which gives special provisions for escapees. The arrangements were made on the basis of assurances of sponsorship afforded by the United States Church World Service Office.

Mr. Tagster will visit relatives in India who also have fled the yoke of Communism, and proceed via London to New York about October 4. He will probably go on lecture tours, speaking about present day Tibet.

In helping to make this possible, the Japan CWS office:

- 1) made up a dossier on Mr. Tagster and sent it to New York;
- 2) arranged for sponsorship and gave the necessary assurances to the US government.
- 3) arranged for an International Red Cross travel document since Mr. Tagster is now stateless;
- 4) advanced travel funds through an arrangement with the US Escapee Program.

This is one of many such cases in which the Japan CWS office is giving vital aid to refugees in cooperation with the World Council of Churches Division of Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees.

"NEW LIFE LEAGUE" - a forty day travelling revival

Several small sect groups in Japan joined together this past spring in the "New Life League" for the purpose of cooperating in evangelistic effort. In the League are the Japan Holiness Church, the Gospel Church, the Free Methodist Church, the Assembly Church, the Emanuel Church, the Brotherhood Church, the Nazarene Church, the Salvation Army and some "pure gospel sects". None of these groups are members of the National Christian Council.

During the past summer the League held a series of revival meetings from Tokyo to the southern part of Honshu in 18 different

cities. Using an automobile donated by Rev. Fred Jarvis, the League staged a forty day campaign under the leadership of Rev. Kazuo Kaneda of the Free Methodist Church. They showed moving pictures, slides, and preached. At the largest meeting 3000 people gathered.

In all about 1200 decision cards were signed. Plans are under way to carry out follow up work this fall with the use of an additional car. Plans are also being laid to film a moving picture here in Japan for the express purpose of Japanese evangelism.

NEW SCRIPTS - for old filmstrips

AVACO has enlisted the help of twenty-four pastors, teachers and other experts to read and revise the scripts which accompany filmstrips. These revised scripts will be recorded on tape by the members of the AVACO Radio Drama Group to be rented together with the filmstrips. The groups is meeting twice a month and has begun work on an experimental group of about ten filmstrips.

COMING EVENTS

(Editor's note:

Although in the past it has been our policy to write of happenings only after they have happened, in response to popular request we are starting this column which will announce in advance important meetings or events in which missionary readers may want to participate. Your help in letting us know about meetings in advance will be appreciated.)

September 20th AVACO will begin a five week ten session workshop on puppets, to be held at the Christian Audio Visual Center. There will be 2½ hour sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for approximately 40 enrolles.

The study will cover from the making of the puppets themselves and how to perform through the writing of scripts, construction of stage and stage settings and discussion of how puppets may be used effectively in the church school and church programs.

Rev. Ishikawa, former General Secretary of the Japan Sunday School Association, has prepared a 164 page illustrated text book for his course which has been mimeographed by AVACO. This covers all the items in the course mentioned above, and in addition, tells of Mr. Ishikawa's own extensive experience in traveling and putting on puppet shows. Also included are a number of scripts which he has written and used. A number of extra copies of this book are available for those who are not able to attend the course.

October 21-22 Kwansai Area Kyodan Related MISSIONARY CONFERENCE
will be held Friday and Saturday, the place and other details to be announced later. Dr. Mary Ely Lyman, recently of Union Theological Seminary in the field of New Testament will be the principal speaker.

November 2-3 NATIONAL MISSION CONFERENCE The annual National Mission Conference of the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan will be held simultaneously in two regional sections. The eastern regional group will meet in Tokyo and the Western one in Osaka. Two lay representatives and the pastor from each church are to be invited. All interested missionaries are welcomed. The purpose is to think, pray and plan for the evangelistic mission of the Church.

October 5-6 National Christian Family Life Movement Conference
Theme: "Present Day Crisis and the Christian Family Life"
Text Romans 8:37. Place: Kowakuen at Maone.
Purpose: To think about what the Christian Gospel has to contribute to the home in the social crisis of today. Who? In addition to those already invited, all interested please contact Miss Ai Sasaki, NCC Office, Tokyo.

Oct. 23-30 Harold Bosley, "Deepening The Spiritual Life", a series of talks at Union Church in Tokyo, Oct 23, 11 AM, 24, 26, 28 evenings at 7:30. Oct. 30, 4:00 PM.

